

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action mailed on April 11, 2006, and the references cited therewith.

Claims 1, 17, and 35 are amended, claim 34 was previously canceled, without prejudice to the Applicant; as a result, claims 1-33 and 35-37 are now pending in this application.

§112 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-33 and 35-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as lacking adequate description or enablement. Although Applicant disagrees with the Examiner's assessment that a particular word or phrase that appears in the claims has to appear in the specification, Applicant has removed the term "independent" and have replaced the language in the claims with exact wording from the specification. More particularly, Applicant believes the test is not whether a particular word or phrase is physically present in the specification but rather one of ordinary skill in the art upon reading the whole specification would have found support for newly introduced terms in the specification. In support of this view, the Examiner's attention is directed to MPEP 2136.02 and more particularly to 608.01(o). Here, it is clear that the "exact language" of an added claim limitation does not have to be literally present in the specification. The question to ask is does the term introduced find support upon reading the disclosure in its entirety by one of ordinary skill in the art.

In the present application, it is clear that the entity name once acquired provides an index into a data structure where cryptographic context information is obtainable and that information can be used to create entirely new secure connections by different group members or entities. This concept is discussed throughout the entire specification; and clearly a new connection is a new session or independent session from any existing session. So, Applicant believes that support did exist for use of the term "independent" from the original filed specification.

However, Applicant has now redacted the term "independent" out of the independent claims and put language that is specifically referenced in the specification that functionally achieves the same thing that Applicant attempted to achieve with the prior amendments. As support for this and as one example, the Examiner's attention is directed to the original filed

specification, page 22 and lines 11-13. Therefore, these rejections are no longer appropriate and should be withdrawn and Applicant respectfully requests an indication of the same.

§103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-5, 8, 13, 15-21, 25, 27-30 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoke et al. (U.S. 6,701,437) in view of Schneier (Applied Cryptography) and Owens et al. (U.S. 5,481,611). It is of course fundamental that in order to sustain an obviousness rejection that each and every step or element in the rejected claims must be taught or suggested in the proposed combination of references.

It appears that for the new rejections, the Examiner has removed the Shimbo reference from the combination and added Owens. Owens is being proffered by the Examiner for the teaching that an entity identifier is used as an index into a data structure to acquire cryptographic context information. This reference in Owens provides a mechanism by which each user id is associated with its own unique key and that key is acquired by a host using the user id to search a database. Owens, column 3 lines 61 and continuing to column 4 line 5.

There is no teaching of a group of users sharing the same cryptographic information in Owens and sharing the same secret key. In fact, Owens teaches that each user has its own unique key. This makes sense because Owens is directed to cell phone usage of a subscriber and is not associated with groups of users engaging in secure communications with one another. Moreover, Schneider is directed to Kerberos tickets that are uniquely associated with specific clients and specific services. That is, in Schneider there is no ability for multiple clients to engage in the same secure connection with an endpoint; rather in Schneider a Kerberos ticket may be used by a single client to engage in a single communication with a single service.

Hoke does provide a teaching of multiple clients engaged in a single secure connection with one another and this is provided via a Virtual Private Network (VPN). Yet, Hoke is directed to a technique by which a dedicated port is not necessary to process VPN traffic. That is, in Hoke headers permit determinations to be made as to whether a communication is to be VPN traffic or non VPN traffic. Hoke uses custom encryption for the VPN traffic, which is typical of VPN communications; what is not typical is that Hoke does not require a specific preconfigured port to enable VPN traffic and it selectively determines whether traffic is VPN

based or not VPN based traffic. The authentication discussed in Hoke is limited to authenticating VPN units and the traffic, the authentication is not associated with authenticating VPN members for participating in the VPN. This again makes sense because by definition a client is preconfigured and has prior knowledge of the encryption being used for a VPN before that client can even participate in the VPN.

So, Schneider and Owens are directed toward teachings by which a single user can authenticate to a single service and Hoke is directed toward teachings by which traffic can be selectively routed or processed as VPN traffic or non VPN traffic. Combining the references will not produce an index or mechanism by which multiple users can acquire common cryptographic information to engage in a same secure connection with one another; rather combining the teachings provide a mechanism by which a user can authenticate using its own uniquely acquired key (cryptographic information) that is not shared and that is not common. So, if one of ordinary skill in the art read references, he/she would have come up with a combination that permitted a user to join a VPN after the user was authenticated and that authentication would have been based on uniquely acquired information or keys associated with the user and not associated with cryptographic context information common to members of a group and acquired via shared secret keys known to the members.

Accordingly, the proposed combination lacks each and every limitation of Applicant's amended independent claims. Therefore, Applicant respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Claims 6, 9-12, 14, 22-24, 26, 31-33 and 36-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoke et al. in view of Schneier and Owens et al., as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Demers et al. (5,857,023). Claims 6, 9-12, and 14 are dependent from amended independent claim 1; claims 22-24, 26, and 31-33 are dependent from amended independent claim 17; and claims 36 and 37 are dependent from amended independent claim 35; thus, for the amendments and remarks presented above with respect to independent claims 1, 17, and 35, the rejections of claims 6, 9-12, 14, 22-24, 26, 31-33, and 36-37 should be withdrawn. Applicant respectfully requests an indication of the same.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (513) 942-0224 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

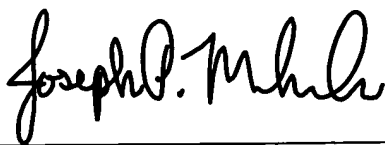
Respectfully submitted,

HILARIE K. ORMAN

By his Representatives,

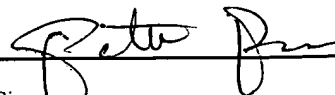
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Date July 11, 2006

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 11 day of July, 2006.

Peter Rubuffoni
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